

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 1-20 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1-20 (Cancelled).

Please add the following new claims:

21. (New) A flexible container comprising:
  - a base portion for engaging a supporting surface;
  - a side portion extending upwardly from said base portion;
  - a non-buckling supporting post system mounted over a substantially central portion of said base portion and supported by said supporting surface; and
  - a sloped upper portion opposite said base portion, and extending upwardly from said side portion to engage said supporting post system;
  - wherein said supporting post system being confined within said base portion and said side portion, and
  - wherein a vertical load carried by said supporting post system is a compression load.
22. (New) The flexible container of claim 21, further comprising an upper cap positioned on said sloped upper portion.

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23. (New) The flexible container of claim 21, further comprising support cables attaching said supporting post system to said supporting surface.
24. (New) The flexible container of claim 21, wherein said supporting post system is hollow.
25. (New) The flexible container of claim 21, further comprising an entry/exit opening in said sloped upper portion.
26. (New) The flexible container of claim 21, further comprising an outer support fabric over said side portion and said sloped upper portion.
27. (New) The flexible container of claim 21, further comprising a covering sheet over said side portion and said sloped upper portion.
28. (New) A partially-closed flexible container comprising:
- a base portion for engaging a supporting surface;
  - a side portion extending upwardly from said base portion;
  - a support rim positioned over said base portion;
  - a sloped upper portion extending upwardly from said side portion and attached to said support rim; and
  - a non-buckling support post system mounted over a substantially central portion of said

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base portion and supported by said supporting surface,

wherein said support post system being confined within said base portion and said side portion, and

wherein a vertical load carried by said support post system is a compression load.

29. (New) The flexible container of claim 28, further comprising a plurality of cables attaching said support rim to said support post system.

30. (New) The flexible container of claim 28, wherein said support post system comprises a hollow post.

31. (New) The flexible container of claim 28, further comprising an entry/exit opening in said sloped upper portion.

32. (New) The flexible container of claim 28, further comprising an outer support fabric over said side portion and said sloped upper portion.

33. (New) The flexible container of claim 28, further comprising a covering sheet over said side portion and said sloped upper portion.

34. (New) A partially-open flexible bag comprising:
- a side portion;
  - a sloped upper portion extending upwardly from said side portion; and
  - a non-buckling support post structure confined within said side portion and said sloped upper portion, and positioned below a substantially central portion of said upper portion, wherein a vertical load carried by said support post structure is a compression load.
- wherein said flexible bag is secured to a supporting surface opposite said upper portion,
- and
- wherein said support post structure is secured to said supporting surface.
35. (New) The flexible bag of claim 34, wherein said flexible bag extends upwardly from said supporting surface, and is secured to one of a support rim and said support post structure, wherein said support rim is positioned below said sloped upper portion of said flexible bag.
36. (New) The flexible bag of claim 34, further comprising a plurality of cables attaching said support rim to said support post structure.
37. (New) The flexible bag of claim 34, wherein said support post structure comprises a hollow post.

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38. (New) The flexible bag of claim 34, further comprising an entry/exit opening in any of said sloped upper portion and said support post structure.
39. (New) The flexible bag of claim 34, further comprising an outer support fabric over said side portion and said sloped upper portion.
40. (New) The flexible bag of claim 34, further comprising a covering sheet over said side portion and said sloped upper portion.